

REMARKS

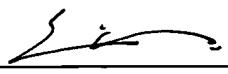
The Official Action mailed March 8, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully noted. This response is filed within three months of the mailing date of the Official Action and therefore is believed to be timely without extension of time. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that this response is being timely filed.

The Applicant notes with appreciation the consideration of the Information Disclosure Statements filed on April 14, 1998; June 7, 2000; August 11, 2000; October 4, 2000; January 25, 2002; and January 24, 2005.

Claims 31-33, 38, 39, 46-51, 55-58, 65, 66, 83-94, 99, 106-110 and 115-135 were pending in the present application prior to the above amendment. The Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 31-33, 46-51, 55-58, 65, 66, 109, 110, 115, 120, 121, 124-127 and 133-135 (page 2, Paper No. 030206). In response to the Examiner's request, non-elected claims 38, 39, 83-94, 99, 106-108, 116-119, 122-123 and 128-13 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, allowed claims 31-33, 46-51, 55-58, 65, 66, 109, 110, 115, 120, 121, 124-127 and 133-135 are pending, and the present application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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